

REMARKS

Initially, Applicants would like to express their appreciation to the Examiner for the detailed Official Action provided, for the acknowledgment of Applicants' Information Disclosure Statement by return of the Form PTO-1449, and for the acknowledgment of Applicants' Claim for Priority and receipt of the certified copies of the priority documents in the Official Action.

Claims 1-21 are currently pending. Claims 1-9 have apparently been withdrawn from consideration by the Examiner. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the outstanding rejections, and allowance of all the claims pending in the present application.

On pages 2 and 3 of the Official Action, claims 10-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by TAYLOR et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,975,090).

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 10-21 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Claim 10 includes, inter alia, "an outer body disposed at or in a vicinity of an ion blowoff port, and a resistance element through which the ground electrode is connected with the outer body." Applicants submit that TAYLOR et al. lacks any disclosure of *a resistance element which connects a ground electrode to an outer body*.

Applicants note that Figures 4A through 5 of TAYLOR et al. depict various embodiments which include needle electrodes 232 and ground electrodes 242. However, there is no disclosure in TAYLOR et al. of a resistance element which connects any of the ground electrodes 242 to an outer body. In particular, Applicants note that there is no mention of such a resistance element at column 5, lines 5-40 or column 6, lines 22-67 of TAYLOR et al., which are the portions pointed out by the Examiner. In contrast, the present application teaches providing such resistance elements in order to reduce electrification around the blowoff port which would interfere with ion emissions. Note, for example, resistance elements 5 in Figures 14-20; page 5, lines 12-18; page 16, lines 10-21; page 17, lines 1-18; page 18, lines 8-17; and page 18, line 28 through page 19, line 3.

Applicants also submit that dependent claims 11-13, which are at least patentable due to their dependency from claim 10, for the reasons noted above, recite additional features of the invention and are also separately patentable over the prior art of record. For example, TAYLOR et al. lacks any disclosure of a resistance element made of a material having a high resistance or a semiconductor, as recited in claim 11. Further, TAYLOR et al. lacks any disclosure of a resistance element which electrically connects a ground electrode to an electroconductive plate which is connected with an outer body, as recited in claim 13.

Claim 14 includes, inter alia, “an outer body disposed on an ion emission side and exposed to an outside, said outer body being made of an antistatic material and connected with the ground electrode.” Applicants submit that TAYLOR et al. lacks any disclosure of *an outer body made of an antistatic material and connected with a ground electrode*.

Applicants note that Figures 4A through 5 of TAYLOR et al. depict various embodiments which include needle electrodes 232 and ground electrodes 242. However, there is no disclosure in TAYLOR et al. of an outer body which is *made of an antistatic material* and which is *connected with a ground electrode*. In particular, Applicants note that there is no mention of such an outer body at column 5, lines 5-40 or column 6, lines 22-67 of TAYLOR et al., which are the portions pointed out by the Examiner. In contrast, the present application teaches providing such an outer body in order to reduce electrification around the blowoff port which would interfere with ion emissions. Note, for example, outer body 8 and page 19, lines 4-11.

Claim 15 includes, inter alia, “said brush base having an opening defined therein for passage of the ions from the ion generator to an outside of the hairbrush; wherein some of the bristles around the opening in the brush base are removed to provide a plain surface area where no bristle exist.” Applicants submit that TAYLOR et al. lacks any disclosure of *an ion passage opening in a brush base around which there is provided a plain surface area with no bristles*.

Applicants note that Figure 2B of TAYLOR et al. shows a brush base having bristles 140 and openings 150. However, there is no disclosure in TAYLOR et al. of the brush base having a plain surface area with no bristles around the openings 150. In particular, as shown in Figure 2B, the bristles 140 are provided in rows which pass between the openings 150, and there is no plain surface without bristles provided around the openings. In contrast, the present application teaches providing such a plain surface without bristles around the openings in order to reduce interference with ions passing out through the blowoff port. Note, for example, plain surface area 18 shown in Figures 20-26 and 29; page 5, line 29 through page 6, line 13; page 20, lines 2-5; page 20, line 28 through page 21, line 9; and page 21, line 21 through page 22, line 20.

Applicants also submit that dependent claims 16-21, which are at least patentable due to their dependency from claim 15, for the reasons noted above, recite additional features of the invention and are also separately patentable over the prior art of record. For example, TAYLOR et al. lacks any disclosure of the following: a surface area encompassed by a cone having its apex occupied by a discharge electrode and flaring outwardly away from the discharge electrode and passing in touch with a peripheral lip region defining an opening in the brush base having no bristle (claim 16); a portion of a brush base around an opening being made of a material having a low electroconductivity (claim 17) or an electrically insulating material (claim 18); a brush base being made of an

antistatic material (claim 19); an indicator for providing an indication of the ions being generated disposed on a brush base adjacent an opening (claim 20) (note that LED in TAYLOR et al. is not on the brush base or adjacent the opening); and an ion guide tube made of an electrically insulating material intervening between an ion generator and a brush base for guiding ions towards an outside of hairbrush (claim 21).

In commenting on the dependent claims, the Examiner has noted columns 4-10 of TAYLOR et al., which includes almost the entire specification of the reference. As noted above, Applicants submit that none of the subject matter of the dependent claims is disclosed in TAYLOR et al. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to indicate, by specifically pointing out, which elements or teachings in TAYLOR et al. he intends to rely upon for his position that the dependent claim subject matter is shown in the reference.

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claims 10-21 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) is improper at least for each and certainly for all of the above-noted reasons. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection, and an early indication of the allowance of these claims.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Consideration of the herein contained remarks, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action, and allowance of the present application and all of the claims therein are respectfully requested and now believed to be appropriate.

Applicants have made a sincere effort to place the present application in condition for allowance and believe that they have now done so.

Should there be any questions or comments, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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